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Northwich Urban District Council



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

For the Year ended 31st Dec., 1956

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NORTHWICH :



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Northwich Urban District Council.

Health Report for 1956.

To the Chairman and Members of the Northwich
Urban District Council.

Mesdames and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit the following statement of essential matters affecting the Public Health of the Town during the year 1956.

SECTION A.

STATISTICS & SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

	1955.	1956.
Area	(2,626)	2,626
Population — Registrar-General's latest estimate of population	(19,730)	19,520
Number of inhabited houses at the end of 1956	(6,371)	6,400
Rateable Value		£304,456
Sum represented by Penny Rate (1956) ...		£1,200

The following extracts from vital statistics of the year relate to net births and deaths after correction for inward and outward transfers by the Registrar-General.

	Total	M.	F.	
Live Births {	Legitimate ..	211	106	105
	Illegitimate ..	11	4	7
	After adjustment by the Comparability Factor			11.38
				11.6
Still Births {	Legitimate ..	4	2	2
	Illegitimate ..	—	—	—
				Rate per 1000 total (live and still) births
				17.7
Deaths.. ..	229	118	111	Death Rate per 1000 of the estimated resident population ..
				11.73
				After adjustment by the Comparability Factor
				11.73

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age:—

All infants per 1000 live births	27.03
Legitimate infants per 1000 legitimate live births ..	28.43
Illegitimate infants per 1000 illegitimate live births ..	—

Deaths from Cancer (all ages) including 8 of the lung ..	36
.. .. Measles (all ages)	—
.. .. Whooping Cough (all ages)	—
.. .. Diphtheria	—

The following table compares the main statistics for 1956 with the years 1944—1955 :-

Year.	Popu- lation	Birth Rate	Death Rate	Infant Death Rate	No. of Deaths from Cancer	No. of Deaths from Tubercu- losis
1944.	18,070	17.43	14.27	41.26	40	13
1945.	18,130	19.02	13.67	60.86	32	8
1946.	19,150	21.14	12.95	46.91	38	13
1947.	19,580	20.02	11.54	40.81	32	1
1948.	19,230	18.09	11.18	28.73	41	9
1949.	18,810	17.33	12.59	39.87	28	8
1950.	18,330	13.64	13.42	32.00	40	—
1951.	17,160	14.10	15.09	45.45	39	4
1952.	16,920	14.59	13.00	28.34	40	2
1953.	16,470	11.53	11.90	36.84	34	4
1954.	15,860	12.35	11.60	5.10	26	2
1955.	19,730	9.83	11.80	36.07	39	1
1956.	19,520	11.38	11.73	27.03	36	5

CAUSES OF DEATH — 1956

(Taken from the Registrar-General's Tables).

	MALES.	FEMALES	TOTAL.
1. Tuberculosis, respiratory	3	2	5
2. Other forms of Tuberculosis	—	—	—
3. Syphilitic Disease	—	—	—
4. Diphtheria	—	—	—
5. Whooping Cough	—	—	—
6. Meningococcal Infections	—	—	—
7. Acute Poliomyelitis	—	—	—
8. Measles	—	—	—
9. Other Infective and Parasitic Diseases ...	1	1	2
10. Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus...	8	—	8
11. Malignant neoplasm, stomach	5	2	7
12. Malignant neoplasm, breast	—	—	—
13. Malignant neoplasm, uterus	—	—	—
14. Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms...	12	9	21
15. Leukaemia, aleukaemia	1	—	1
16. Diabetes	—	2	2
17. Vascular lesions of nervous system ...	14	21	35
18. Coronary disease, angina	13	6	19
19. Hypertension with heart disease	1	1	2
20. Other heart diseases	23	35	58
21. Other circulatory diseases	3	6	9
22. Influenza	1	1	2
23. Pneumonia	4	4	8
24. Bronchitis	5	3	8
25. Other diseases of respiratory system ...	1	—	1
26. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	1	1	2
27. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	—	—	—
28. Nephritis and nephrosis	1	2	3
29. Hyperplasia of prostate	3	—	3
30. Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	—	—	—
31. Congenital malformations	1	—	1
32. Other defined and ill-defined diseases ...	9	10	19
33. Motor vehicle accidents	—	—	—
34. All other accidents	8	4	12
35. Suicide	—	1	1
36. Homicide and operations of war	—	—	—
TOTAL	118	111	229

New Industries—Messrs. British Crêpe Ltd., have erected a factory off Tabley Street in which nylon spinning is carried out and a new factory is being built (1957) for Messrs. Conlowe Ltd., in Warrington Road.

Messrs. I.C.I. Ltd., have had considerable extensions at Winnington and Lostock and have proposals for 1957 for a large administrative block at Moss Road to start in 1957.

New Highways—A new highway was opened in 1956 to be called Chester Way. This is an internal bypass and allows traffic to bypass the congested area of the Bull Ring, High Street and Witton Street.

SECTION B.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

(A) Provided by the District Council.

(1) Staff.

W. S. Slater, M.B. Ch.B., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.	Medical Officer of Health, Hartford Hill, Darwin Street, Northwich, Cheshire.	(Services shared with the other three Mid- Cheshire Districts, the County Council ~~and~~ ~~the North and Mid-~~ ~~Cheshire Hospital Man-~~ ~~agement Committee~~).
Clerical Staff.	1 person (whole-time).	(Services shared with the other three Mid- Cheshire Districts).
T. Baines, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A., Cert. R.S.I., Meat and Other Foods.	Chief Public Health Inspector, The Council House, Northwich.	(Northwich Urban District Council only)
F. Johnson, Cert. R.S.I., Meat and Other Foods.	Additional Public Health Inspector.	-do-
Mrs. M. McGowan,	Clerical Assistant.	-do-

(2) Laboratory Facilities.

The Public Health Laboratory Services in Manchester, which are provided free of charge to the Northwich Urban District Council, proved adequate during the year. In addition, this Service has co-operated in the free transport of samples twice monthly from this area. Details of the samples and specimens are given later in the report.

(3) Environmental Services.

Details of the other Services, e.g. Public Health and Housing Inspections, Food Examinations, etc., etc., provided by the Northwich Urban District Council, are recorded later in this report.

(B) Isolation Hospital Services.

After 31st March, 1955, Davenham Isolation Hospital discontinued the admittance and treatment of cases of Infectious Diseases, as accommodation was required for a Maternity Unit. This conversion, of course, necessitated the transport of Infectious cases requiring hospital treatment to hospitals some miles away from their homes. It is, however, very gratifying to know that the Hospital still admits from the area a number of elderly chronic sick patients as well as the maternity cases.

(2) Laboratory Facilities.

The Public Health Laboratory Services in Manchester, which are provided free of charge to the Northwich Urban District Council, proved adequate during the year. In addition, this Service has co-operated in the transport of the samples from this area. Details of the samples and specimens are given later in the report.

(3) Environmental Services.

Details of the other Services, e.g., Public Health and Housing Inspections, Food Examinations, etc., etc., provided by the Northwich Urban District Council are recorded later in this report.

(C) Provided by the County Council.

The Cheshire County Council have Officers discharging duties in the Urban area under the following Services :- School Medical, Maternity and Child Welfare, including Milk Food Sales, Tuberculosis, School Dental, Health Visiting, Weights and Measures Inspection, Specialist Services, e.g., Orthopaedic, Ophthalmic, Pædiatric, Home and Domiciliary Midwifery Services, Speech Therapy, Residential and Temporary Accommodation under the County Welfare Services, etc., etc.

The Mid-Cheshire Divisional Health Committee (under the auspices of the County Council) provided the following Services:—

(a) Vaccination and Immunisation Schemes.

The work done during the year 1956 in the Northwich Urban District is detailed as follows:—

Vaccination against Smallpox.

Pre-School Children	...	...	...	...	63
School Children	...	...	...	...	4
Adults	...	...	...	...	14

Diphtheria Immunisation.

Pre-School Children	...	...	...	...	19
School Children	...	...	...	...	—
Re-immunised	...	...	...	...	92

Whooping Cough Immunisation.

Pre-School Children	...	...	...	...	4
School Children	...	...	...	...	—

Combined Diphtheria and Whooping Cough Immunisation.

Pre-School Children	...	...	...	...	149
School Children	...	...	...	...	3

Vaccination against Poliomyelitis.

It is with very great satisfaction that I am able to report the commencement, during May, 1956, of the scheme for the vaccination of children born between 1947/54 against Poliomyelitis, a disease which can be one of the most crippling.

Although only a limited amount of vaccine was available to treat about 10% of those children whose parents had consented to the treatment, a successful start was made in May, 1956, and by the end of the year 82 Urban children had completed their course of protective treatment.

The interest shown by the Urban parents in this new and somewhat untried field of preventive inoculation during 1956 can be summarised as follows :-

Approximate number of Consent Cards				
distributed to Urban parents	...	...	...	1,800
Number of Consents received	...	...	...	916
(50.8%)				

During the year 1956, the prophylactic which gives protection against both diphtheria and whooping cough continued to be used. This vaccine reduces the number of injections from five to three for each child, and should preferably be commenced when the infant is 3—4 months old.

(b) Sitting Case Car and Ambulance Service.

The service in the area continued to deal with Northwich Urban patients expeditiously and without serious complaint throughout the year.

(c) Prevention of Illness — Care and After Care.

Nursing requisites and after-care equipment were loaned for the use of the sick and needy in a number of homes during the year.

(d) Domestic Help Service.

Domestic Helps have been provided during 1956 in 44 households in the Urban District. The kind of cases assisted included old age, confinement, etc.

SECTION C.**SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.**

Water Supply.—The water services are under the control of the Mid and South East Cheshire Water Board

During the course of the year, the Water Board submitted to me for information, 17 copies of the Analyst's Reports of samples of water taken in the Northwich Urban District, all of which were reported upon satisfactorily.

In addition, 3 samples taken by the Health Department and submitted to the Public Health Laboratory for bacteriological examination, were also reported upon satisfactorily.

Swimming Bath.—It was as recent as the winter of 1954-55 that the Baths were made available for winter swimming for the first time. Each winter since then attendances have increased. The Brine Bath, as one concludes from its name contains a proportion of brine, which has an attraction for those seeking to keep in good health. Apart from the physical properties of brine it does appear to impart a feeling of well being to the bathers. Victims of Polio have made use of this property of brine and appear to benefit to some extent from it. New dressing room accommodation envisaged at an early date will provide better and more hygienic accommodation for the public, and will allow greater room on the poolside. Better ventilation is also planned for the near future. In recent years the purification of swimming bath water has become quite a skilled procedure and the care exercised by the Superintendent and his staff is shown by a series of satisfactory bacteriological reports on the samples submitted for examination during the year.

The total number of bathers using the Swimming Baths during 1956 was 67,642. This figure includes members of the public, organised parties of school-children and in-patients of a nearby Miners' Rehabilitation Centre, etc.

Children's Paddling Pool.—The floor of the pool was repaired and bacteriological examination of the water taken during the previous year suggested the need for twice weekly filling of the pool, with the addition of hypochloride, and treatment of the floor by brushing with bleaching powder.

Recreational and Open Spaces.—The Parks and Cemetery Superintendent of the Northwich Urban District, Mr. T. Garwood, reports as follows :-

“Whilst this year no major developments have taken place in the Parks Department, the amenities provided by my Council are being used on an ever increasing scale. Soccer pitches are being utilised more and more both by Schools and by Amateur soccer clubs. Rest Gardens—especially on housing sites—are used to capacity during Spring and Summer and the seating accommodation is used to the full. Grass areas in all parks now cut extremely short continue to be extremely popular, especially with young mothers

who are able to allow their children to play without danger. I feel that amenities such as the foregoing should be provided by Local Authorities on an ever increasing scale."

Drainage, Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.—The Surveyor, Mr. J. R. W. Clark, reports under this heading as follows :-

"There has been no major collapse of sewers during the year. The Council and the Rivers Board have approved in principle proposals for the relief of flood in Barlow's Yard, preparations are in hand and it is hoped that the work will be carried out in 1957/58.

No adverse reports on the standard of the effluent have been received from the Towns Works. The Northwich Rural District Council's works continue to receive sewage from Hartford, Rudheath, Leftwich and Lostock areas."

River Pollution.—"There is nothing of importance to report under this heading."

Flooding.—"No flood occurred during 1956 affecting any of the highways or properties."

Town Lift. — The Surveyor further reports :-

'A partial lift was carried out in the financial year 1956/57 at the junction of London Road, Brockhurst Street and Hayhurst Street. The work was carried out with a new material called wet-mix limestone which allowed traffic to pass over immediately after laying. The job was carried out according to plan by machine spreader and with the co-operation of the various owners many minor improvements were made.

The Council have now authorised the lifting of part of Castle Street, and it is anticipated this will be carried out in 1959/60."

New Health Service Centre.—"The possible erection of a Health Clinic/Welfare Centre in association with the proposed redevelopment of the area near the Police Station was considered during the year in conjunction with the Cheshire County Council."

Street Sweeping.—"The continued increase in the amount of litter in the Town's area has to be noted, although up to date no serious complaint has been made, it is hoped that proposals to fix 56 litter baskets to lamp columns will be approved."

Public Conveniences.—"Minor improvements have been carried out and the need for the provision of a new convenience in the Market Street area when this is reconstructed is being kept well in mind."

Mr. Baines, the Chief Public Health Inspector reports :-

Closet Accommodation.—“No conversions were carried out during the year but the Council have agreed to make a grant in respect of four conversions, the work to be carried out early in 1957.

Further “unfit” houses dealt with under Section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936, will result in a further reduction in the number of pail closets. When the conversions and demolitions have been completed the number of pails in the district will then be less than 10.

Public Cleansing.—The refuse collection has continued on the system of approximately 10 to 11 day collection. Although this is not regarded as satisfactory as a weekly collection, few complaints have been received, with the result that the Council are satisfied with the present service as compared with the previous weekly collection service. Indeed, the difficulties of obtaining and retaining good labour make it doubtful whether a weekly collection could be regularly maintained, should the Council decide to revert back to the weekly service. The aim of a Public Health Department is, however, a weekly refuse collection service when circumstances permit.

A new salvage trailer was purchased during the year and there is general satisfaction that the paper which is saved by the public or salvaged by the workmen does go into the Depot instead of going on to the tip, with the subsequent difficulties of having to dispose of it and the risk of fire. Generally speaking refuse collection goes along very quietly with very few serious complaints from the public. In connection with the collection of refuse, it has been the aim of the Department for the past seven years to move all waste materials from premises as far as is reasonable and practical, but it is most disappointing to find that in spite of this it is still necessary to spend time and money in removing accumulations indiscriminately dumped in various spots throughout the district. Not only do these give an untidy appearance to the town but they can be a breeding place for rodents, and in the case of mattresses deposited in any water they can give rise to other nuisances. It is difficult to know how to deal with this problem.

Disposal of Refuse.—The disposal during the year of refuse has been carried out most satisfactorily. The use of the tipping site off Greenbank Lane adjacent to Saxons Lane tip was discontinued during the year in order to carry out tipping on swampy land belonging to a local firm of shipbuilders. This continued throughout the year and a large area of otherwise derelict land has been reclaimed. This has provided the Council with suitable tipping land and will also make available to the

shipbuilding firm extra land for expansion, leading eventually to more local employment. One rather significant point has arisen from this site for tipping, namely that this land being in an enclosed area there was no interference from outsiders. The tip was left undisturbed and no nuisances arose, either from fire or any other source.

During the summer months the normal practice of treatment for flies and other insects was carried out. A close watch was kept for any rat infestation, but no evidence of this was found.

The collection and disposal of kitchen waste continued as last year.

Baling of waste paper was carried out very satisfactorily and the electric baling machine has again justified its purchase, and running costs have also continued to be low. The figures for salvage collected and disposed of during the year are given below, and it will be noted that in spite of the restrictions on the sale of paper, an average of 28 tons per month was disposed of, which is regarded as a very high figure for a district with a population of approximately 20,000.

		Tons.	Cwts.	Qrs.	£	s.	d.
Waste Paper	...	335	11	3	£2,566	10	9
Salvage, Other than							
Waste Paper	...	68	2	2	£ 304	15	3

The Council's purchase some years ago of a Chaseside Light Excavator has proved to be a very good move in as much that the disposal of refuse can be carried out in a far more satisfactory and less costly method than would be the case with manual labour, always assuming that such labour would be available. It is anticipated that early in 1957 the Saxons Lane site will be graded over, in order to put this area to some use. It is a problem to obtain soil or any suitable type of covering material and since the site itself never produced anything suitable during the tipping operations it may well be that the provision of covering materials may prove to be rather costly, but this is a matter for future consideration.

Canal Boats.—The position with regard to canal boats is the same as last year; the number being registered with this Authority is 31.

Licensed Caravan Sites.—There are no licensed sites in the district but from time to time there have been the occasional hawkers and gypsies camping for short periods until it has been possible to get the police to move them from the sites they have occupied. When one considers the amount of time and trouble that is taken in hounding these people from place to place, the question arises as to whether it would not be better to arrange

for a selected site to be fitted with water and proper sanitation making a suitable charge to meet the costs of keeping the site properly supervised. It is, of course, realised that the solution is not quite so simple as the brief outline makes it appear to be, as other complications might arise as some of these "passengers" cannot be regarded as genuine caravaners with their own code of conduct, or responsible show people.

Disinfestation of Premises.—The treatment of insect infestation has been maintained throughout the year. Complaints were dealt with at 48 premises. This disinfestation service is free and every encouragement is given to occupiers of all types of premises to notify any infestation in order that early treatment can be given to prevent the infestations spreading to adjoining properties; particularly is this desirable in the case of beetles and bed bugs. It is interesting to note the low incidence of bed bugs now as compared with pre-war days. Undoubtedly this is due to a more enlightened public outlook and the more effective means of treatment available nowadays.

Rag, Flock and Other Fillings Act, 1954.—The position in respect of this section remains the same.

Pet Animals Act, 1951.—During the year one of the premises in the district was discontinued as a pet shop under this Act, and another premises was licensed, so that there are now four premises licensed as pet shops in the district.

Cheshire County Council Act, 1953.—This Act makes provision for dealing with various aspects of public health, including the registration of hairdressers and barbers, 35 of which have been registered up to date, an increase of one on last year's figures. The Council have also bye-laws in respect of these trades, but unfortunately staff is not available to carry out the frequent routine inspections which are desirable. This same difficulty of staff shortages will go on recurring as more and more duties are added to the Department.

Clean Air.—Probably the most significant event of 1956, apart from the introduction of the Poliomyelitis vaccination scheme, was the introduction of the Clean Air Act. As a result of this new Act the Council agreed in principle to purchase and to set up deposit gauges and that more detailed consideration be given in 1957 for inclusion in the annual estimates.

This new legislation will be yet another new responsibility on the Health Department if the requirements of the Act are to be properly carried out.

Possibly in connection with clean air the big problem in the town is pollution which is produced by the town's main industry. Here the problem is one of tremendous magnitude and although the firm in question have carried out a large amount of work at a high cost a nuisance does exist and merely varies in its severity from time to time. The firm itself undoubtedly is prepared to do everything reasonably possible and however undesirable this nuisance may be one has to accept the fact that the solution will be difficult, costly and probably take considerable time.

Public Mortuary.—The public mortuary came into use in February, 1956 and has proved to be a great asset in providing facilities for post mortem examinations and the subsequent care of the bodies. On two or three occasions the viewing room, which is furnished as a chapel has been used to great advantage for people who have had no facilities for the keeping of a body. The provision, by a local firm, of oak furniture to represent an altar complete with an oak cross is much appreciated. A regular supply of flowering plants are supplied by the Council's Parks Department, thereby making this particular section of the mortuary a little less harrowing to the relatives, etc., who have to visit the mortuary. Many expressions of gratitude have been received from them. The post mortem room itself is very well equipped and in every way suitable for this purpose. The general maintenance of the furnishings, especially during the winter months, does need to be carried out carefully to avoid deterioration. The refrigerator which holds three bodies has proved a boon for keeping the bodies in a proper condition.

Rodent Control.—The position can be regarded as satisfactory. Regular servicing was carried out at 13 premises under contract, although one of these was discontinued in November. Regular treatment was carried out at the Sewerage Works at Winnington, and 10% of manholes throughout the district were test-baited and found to be free from infestation. The refuse tips were serviced regularly and except in one instance were free from any real infestation. Here it was found that the former tipping site in Saxons Lane had some infestation, but this was subsequently traced to the British Railways embankment running adjacent to this site. Immediate attention was given by the British Railways staff and the nuisance removed. Treatment for rats and mice was also carried out at 183 premises, the Council still continuing to give free service for any rat and mice infestation at domestic dwellings. In order that this essential part of the Health Department work should not be neglected, and in view of the difficulty of obtaining a suitable man, a driver was transferred from the Refuse Collection service and trained as a Rodent Operator. This

has proved to be reasonably successful, and proper attention can be paid to the duties which are the Council's responsibility under the Prevention and Damage by Pests Act, 1949.

Common Lodging Houses.—There are no Common Lodging houses in Northwich.

Schools.—As stated in last year's report the County Education Committee is responsible generally for School premises in the district. No inspection has yet been made of the schools in connection with the Food Hygiene Regulations, however, an early visit along with the County Officer concerned is expected.

Factories.—Although no routine inspections of factories as such have taken place, occasional visits for other purposes have been made and generally speaking, the facilities and amenities provided under the Factories Act are satisfactory, though the need for regular routine visits remains. Here again staff to carry out this work is the difficulty.

Staff — Public Health Inspectors.—During the year as is generally known, the Sanitary Inspectors Change of Designation Act, 1957, changed the designation from Sanitary Inspector to Public Health Inspector. Whilst in many cases this has little significance it has been commented upon by several of the food trades people that it is an improvement and one which meets with their general approval. Apparently, in the past they have felt that a visit from the Sanitary Inspector gave a wrong impression to their customers, who were ignorant of the purpose behind the Inspector's visits, however, the term "Public Health Inspector" does cover the duties of the Inspector more completely.

Qualifications.—At this stage it is perhaps unlikely that the change of designation and the re-consideration of examining bodies will in any way increase the supply of Inspectors. It does seem obvious that a person who has to undergo the prolonged training to gain the qualifications necessary to do this work properly warrants a greater recognition in status with Local Authorities with the consequent increase in salary. Although the question of further staff with this Council has not yet been fully or seriously considered it is becoming quite evident that an additional Health Inspector is needed if all the new Public Health legislation giving greater authority and powers is to be properly implemented. If Local Authorities wish to see these new and additional responsibilities smoothly and efficiently implemented then an adequate staff of qualified inspectors must be made available.

Paid Pupillage.—Many Local Authorities do appear to be reluctant to engage pupils even though the qualified staff is so scarce, but it is undoubtedly an asset to any reasonably sized authority to have paid pupils on their staff. They are able to carry out less responsible duties and so free the more experienced staff for more important duties. Whilst additional qualified staff can receive 50% grant towards the salary to be paid, in the case of pupils this is not so, consequently the position could arise whereby it is costing Local Authorities more for a paid pupil than it would cost them for a qualified inspector. The remedy of course is that a grant should be made in the case of approved pupils with Authorities who have sufficient facilities for the practical training of Health Inspectors.”

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA

Statement of Inspections made and Notices Issued.

(Based upon a Statement made by the Public Health Inspector)

Nature of Inspections made.	Number	Number of Notices Served		Result of Service of Notices	
		Statutory	Informal	Notices Complied with	Notices Remaining in hand
1. Dwelling Houses (general inspection) ..	741		161	177	25
2. Cellar Dwellings	—	—	—	—	—
3. Back-to-Back Houses	—	—	—	—	—
4. Tents, Vans, Sheds, &c.	8	—	8	8	—
5. Courts, Yards, Passages	—	—	—	—	—
6. Pail Closets	18	—	4	4	—
7. Cesspools	2	—	—	—	—
8. House Drainage	103	—	35	35	—
9. Ditches and Watercourses	7	—	3	3	—
10. Offensive Accumulations	33	—	24	24	—
11. Keeping of Animals	19	—	—	—	—
12. Offensive Trades	—	—	—	—	—
13. (a) Slaughterhouses					
(Public)	—	—	—	—	—
(Public)	1137	—	19	19	—
(b) Other places where food is provided or sold	433	—	—	—	—
14. Piggeries	4	—	3	3	—
15. (a) Dairies	7	—	1	1	—
(b) Cowsheds	—	—	—	—	—
(c) Milkshops	24	—	—	—	—
16. (a) Factories	50	—	15	19	—
(b) Workshops	—	—	—	—	—
(c) Workplaces	—	—	—	—	—
(d) Outworkers' Premises	2	—	—	—	—
17. Bakehouses (Overground)	29	—	9	9	—
18. Smoke Nuisances	32	—	9	10	—
19. Canal Boats	3	—	—	—	—
20. Infectious Disease Inquiries and Revisits	20	—	—	—	—
21. Miscellaneous (including Rats and Mice)	701	—	27	27	—
Totals ..	3373	—	318	339	25

FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 and 1948.

Part I of the Act.

1.—Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by the Public Health Inspectors):-

Premises.	Number on Register	Number of		
		In- spections	Written Notices	Occupiers prosecuted
1. Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	15	8	—	—
2. Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authorities	100	42	15	—
3. Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	—	—	—	—
Total	115	50	15	—

2.—Cases in which defects were found:—

Particulars.	Number of cases in which defects were found.				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of Cleanliness.. ..	3	3	—	3	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature..	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation ..	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences					—
(a) Insufficient	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	3	3	—	3	—
(c) Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork) ..	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL ..	6	6	—	6	—

SECTION D. HOUSING.

Provision of New Houses.—

The Surveyor reports :-

The number of houses built by the Council during 1956 was 156.

The number of houses built by Private Enterprise during 1956 was 4.

There have been no conversions of large houses to flats but the Council have allowed the conversion of 1 house into office accommodation.

Application was made during the year for a large site for housing at Platt's Farm and Lear's Farm, Leftwich. A public enquiry was held by the Ministry of Town and Country Planning and the decision became known in 1957. The Ministry will not agree to the use of this site for housing purposes, but agree that the Council requires sites for about 1,000 houses.

Housing Act, 1936 and Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954.

Further progress has again been made this year in clearing unfit houses in the district. 62 houses have been represented under Section 11, and demolition orders are made in respect of these houses with the exception of 5. These 5 had closing orders made under the Local Government Miscellaneous Order, Section 10. This has been done to protect adjoining property. These representations added to those which have been dealt with previously since the end of the war do illustrate the active interest which the Northwich Urban District Council has in dealing with unfit houses in the district. Whilst this is real progress and a policy to be commended in the case of houses which are unfit, and cannot be made reasonably fit, it is evident that a greater problem looms for the future. This problem has been referred to in previous years, namely, that it is becoming more and more obvious that as the clearing of unfit property proceeds that the houses to be dealt with now, whilst unfit, are in better shape than those dealt with in the early days. The consequence of this is that now the difference between an unfit house suitable for demolition and the unfit house which might be worth repairing is at times very small. Obviously the houses which can be saved ought to be, but the difficulty begins to arise as to the action that can be taken. Repeatedly during the course of inspection have occupants of "slum" houses said that whilst they agree that their accommodation is unsatisfactory they do not want particularly to be transferred to a house possessing all the amenities of a modern council house, because of the higher rental or in many

cases there is no desire on the part of some of the tenants to move from familiar streets and surroundings into another part of the district. This, of course, applies particularly in the case of elderly tenants.

Having in mind the quite large number of houses in the town which fall into the category of not being fit but not condemnable, consideration must be given of the steps necessary to prevent further deterioration which will bring them into the condemnable category, and at the same time make them into homes which can be regarded as comfortable and satisfying. There is no doubt at all that if this could be achieved there would be a demand for such houses. Whilst Council estates are an asset and are desired by many people, by virtue of gardens and open spaces, it must be accepted that many people still desire to live in the warmer atmosphere of the terraced type dwellings with little or no gardens and readily accessible to town and work. When one views some of these older type cottages which are owner occupied and can see what is achieved by way of comforts etc., where there is real pride of ownership, it must be realised that there are many rented sub-standard houses which still have a useful if limited life. The problem, of course, is to find someone, or some body, with the will and the money to carry out the necessary reconditioning. If this could be achieved it is possible that it would help many Authorities in their housing programmes.

The re-housing of occupants of unfit houses in Northwich is also governed to a large degree by the amount of building land available in the district. Any sites that are available in the district seem to be limited by conditions of building which increases the cost so much that the rents reach a fantastic figure. It seems, therefore, that in view of the many difficulties which exist in this district, that the recovery by the Council of some of the borderline unfit older type of house does commend itself, thereby producing well sited houses at rents which are reasonable, and at the same time avoiding encroachment on agricultural land which the country needs so much.

Regarding the repair of houses under Section 9, Housing Act, 1936, it is very difficult under the standards of fitness which have been laid down by the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, and with the low rents which are at present received by the owners, to see whether any real progress can be made. Some owners quite understandably are pleased to relinquish their houses for demolition rather than carry out repairs and incur expenses that can never be recovered by way of rent. It does seem, therefore, that the better way would be by the proposal outlined in the previous paragraphs.

During the year 15 grants were given to the value of £2,306 16s. 11d. in connection with improvement grants, and houses which were only mediocre in character have taken on a new lease of life with the addition of modern amenities.

SECTION E.

INSPECTION & SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

(a) **Milk Supply.**—The milk supply of Northwich from a cleanliness point of view has again been very satisfactory. Out of 144 samples of milk only two were unsatisfactory. The number of milk distributors retailing milk in the Northwich area is 32 and there is one registered dairy. The following licences were granted to sell Pasteurised, Tuberculin Tested and Sterilised Milk during 1956.

8 licences to sell Tuberculin Tested Milk
24 licences to sell Pasteurised Milk
3 licences to sell Sterilised Milk

Supplementary Licences :-

8 licences to sell Tuberculin Tested Milk
8 licences to sell Pasteurised Milk

Milk Sampling.—Regular sampling took place during the year with results as follows :-

	Satisfactory.	Unsatisfactory.
11 Tuberculin Tested Milk	11	—
37 T.T. Pasteurised Milk	37	—
86 Pasteurised Milk	84	2
10 Sterilised Milk	10	—

At the latter part of the year, owing to petrol rationing, the local collection of samples by the Public Health Laboratory Service was discontinued and it was then necessary to send the samples to Sale for collection there by the Laboratory. Whilst the new arrangements are not quite so convenient, it is possible now to carry out “surprise” sampling at different and irregular times rather than taking them on fixed days as previously. Northwich has a good, clean and safe milk supply now, and once again much of the credit for this should go to the local producers.

(b) **Ice Cream.**—The number of registered premises for the sale of ice-cream is as follows :-

Registered premises for the sale of ice-cream	58
Registered premises for the sale and manufacture of ice-cream	1
...	...
...	...
...	...
Total	59

22 samples were submitted for laboratory examination and these proved to be very satisfactory. Much of the ice-cream sold locally is produced mainly by three or four of the well-known ice-cream manufacturers, and as results show, the standard of cleanliness is very high.

Grade 1	19
Grade 2	3
Grade 3	Nil
Grade 4	Nil

(c) **Food Inspection.**—In last year's report reference was made to one slaughterhouse undergoing extensive repairs. These repairs, which practically meant the re-building of the premises, have been completed, however, the occupier of the premises has not so far used it. One other slaughterhouse which came into the district as a result of the boundary extension, has been closed due to the occupier transferring to another area.

**Carcases and Offal inspected and condemned
in whole or in part :—**

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number Killed (if known)	602	876	30	4759	2497
Number Inspected	602	876	30	4759	2497
<i>All diseases except Tuberculosis & Cysticerci .</i>					
Whole Carcases condemned ...	—	2	2	2	2
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	70	130	—	274	55
Percentage of the num- ber inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysti- cerci	11.6	15.0	6.6	5.8	2.28
<i>Tuberculosis only :</i>					
Whole Carcases condemned ...	1	8	—	—	2
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	55	162	—	—	50
Percentage of the num- ber inspected affected with tuberculosis ...	9.3	19.4	—	—	2.0
<i>Cysticercosis :</i>					
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrige- ration	—	—	—	—	—
Generalised and tot- ally condemned ...	—	—	—	—	—

One of the slaughterhouses in regular use has had an extension added which enables the meat to be moved from the slaughtering room into this additional hanging room. Another of the slaughterhouses is so constructed that immediately a carcass has been dressed it can be moved into the shop along a continuous rail, and in a third case the meat can be moved from the place of immediate slaughter to a more remote part of the slaughterhouse which later on may be converted into a chilling room.

Generally speaking at the 5 slaughterhouses where the bulk of the slaughtering for the district takes place conditions can be considered very satisfactory.

All the meat slaughtered in Northwich is inspected, even though this has meant inconvenient times of working, particularly Saturday afternoons, occasional Sundays and generally every Bank Holiday. Until Local Authorities can properly control the hours of slaughter there seems little prospect of reducing these difficulties. In all cases the butchers do co-operate, but they naturally consider their own convenience from a business point of view rather than from an inspection point of view.

The quality of meat slaughtered in the district is very high and although over 8 tons of meat have been condemned this in the main consists of offal and is no particular reflection on the quality of the carcass. As will be seen from the following table, the number of carcasses actually condemned is extremely small out of the total number of animals slaughtered.

The Condemnation of Meat.—Meat condemned at slaughterhouses is stained and disposed of by the retailers to reputable firms who process this condemned meat for fertilisers, etc. In the case of other food condemned at the shops, this is condemned as a result of voluntary surrender and is received into the Council's Health Depot, from there it is either disposed of by inclusion in the kitchen waste, in which case it goes to pig swill after being suitably processed of course, otherwise if it is not suitable for this purpose it is disinfected and buried in the refuse tip.

The total weight of meat condemned was 8 tons 2 cwts. 31lbs.

Other Foods.—As a result of voluntary surrender of food by traders at the various food premises in the district, the total of ~~1-ton~~ 15 cwts. 98 lbs. of food was condemned. The types of food referred to were :-

Assorted Tins	...	...	986 lbs.
Frozen Beef	...	...	125 lbs.
Tins, Veal, Ham & Tongue			281 lbs.
Tins of Corned Beef	...		48 lbs.
Currants	...	...	14 lbs.
Cake	...	...	24 lbs.
Bacon	...	...	121 lbs.
Sausage	...	...	43 lbs.
Butter	...	...	2 lbs.
Fresh Peaches	...	...	28 lbs.
Fresh Salmon	...	...	50 lbs.
Frozen Eggs	...	...	56 lbs.

Total 1,778 lbs.

No special examination of stock or of a consignment of food has been necessary during the year.

Fried Fish.—There are now only 13 premises in use for the frying of fish as against 22 recently, and it seems that this particular food commodity is losing some of its former popularity.

Bakehouses.—The 15 bakehouses in the district are satisfactory and steps are taken at every opportunity to bring about improvements wherever necessary. 29 routine inspections were made during the year.

Food Premises in the Area.

Grocers and Greengrocers	...	...	15
Sweets and Confectionery	...	...	32
Grocers	...	...	69
Greengrocers	...	...	13
Cafes	...	...	12
Fish and Greengrocery	...	...	6
Herbalist	...	...	1
Bakers and Confectioners	...	...	17
Wines and Spirits	...	...	5
Grocery, Sweets and Off Licence	...		8
Chemists	...	...	11
Fish and Chips	...	...	13
Wet Fish and Poultry	...	...	2
Cooked Meats	...	...	2
Butchers	...	...	27
One Public Market which includes stalls :-			
2 Butchers, 2 Cooked Meats, Farm Produce and Confectioners.			

Other Foods.—The following, based upon a statement by the County Council Weights and Measures Inspectors, is a summary of other samples obtained in the Northwich Urban District during the year 1956 :-

Nature of Sample	Number obtained	Number adulterated or not up to the recognised standard of quality
Asprin Tablets	1	—
Baked Beans	1	—
Battenburg	1	—
Chocolate Cake Mixture ..	1	—
Castor Oil	1	—
Coffee	1	—
Crab (dressed)	1	—
Cream of Tartar	1	—
Flour (Self Raising)	1	—
Gin	1	—
Glauber's Salt	1	—
Ice Cream	1	—
Iced Lolly	1	—
Lard	1	—
Margarine	1	—
Milk (fresh)	36	2*
Olive Oil	1	—
Orange Drink	1	—
Root Ginger	1	—
Sweets (Lollipops)	1	—
Sweets (Wine Gums)	1	—
Whisky	1	—
Total ...	40	2

*** Particulars of non-standard Samples.**

Milk	Genuine but abnormal milk deficient in solids-not-fat to the extent of 2.3%.	No action.
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Milk (Channel Island)	Deficient in fat to the extent of 12.5%.	No action.
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SECTION F.
PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS
AND OTHER DISEASES.

(1) The incidence of Infectious Diseases was low, with the exception of measles, as may be gathered from the following table :-

DISEASE	Total Cases Notified	Cases Admitted to Hospital
Scarlet Fever	6	—
Acute Pneumonia	7	—
Erysipelas	1	—
Puerperal Pyrexia	—	—
Dysentery	—	—
Measles	191	—
Whooping Cough	22	—
Poliomyelitis (Paralytic)	1	1
Poliomyelitis (Non-Paralytic)	2	1

(2) TUBERCULOSIS.

The table below details the ages of both new cases and deaths from both forms of Tuberculosis.

TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Mortality during 1956.

Age Periods.		New Cases.				Deaths.			
		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
		M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Under 1 year	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1- 5 years	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5-15	” ...	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
15-25	” ...	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
25-35	” ...	—	—	—	—	1	2	—	—
35-45	” ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45-55	” ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55-65	” ...	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
65 and upwards	...	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
TOTALS	...	1	2	—	—	3	2	—	—

During 1956, 5 cases were admitted to and 8 discharged from sanatoria.

Number of patients on the Tuberculosis Register at the end of the years:—

1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956
182	176	146	151	146	137	101	106	79	66	80	75

B.C.G. Protection against Tuberculosis.—In addition to the B.C.G. protection against tuberculosis as carried out at the local Chest Clinic on actual contacts to cases of tuberculosis and the vaccination of new-born babies at the St. Mary's Hospital, Manchester, the parents of school children of the 12/13 years age group in the area have been offered this new form of protective treatment. The response to date on the part of the parents to take advantage of this treatment for their children has been good as may be gathered from the following :-

No. of Consents received	...	...	...	195
No. tested and found to need the vaccination	...	...	...	140

(3) MASS RADIOGRAPHY.

The Unit based upon Stockport last visited the area in November, 1956. This was a special visit for the purpose of X-raying those 12/13 year old children in the school B.C.G. scheme who were found to be "Mantoux Positive". The response was most satisfactory.

As it is almost two years since the Unit visited this area to offer their services to the members of the general public, it is hoped that a further visit for this purpose can be arranged at an early date.

(4) DISINFECTION OF PREMISES.

The disinfection of 13 homes and other premises was carried out during the year as follows :-

For Tuberculosis (plus steam disinfection of bedding)	...	...	...	6
For Infectious Diseases, etc.	...	...	...	7

(5) CHILDREN'S SUMMER CAMP.

In connection with a Holiday Camp sponsored by a local industry, the medical inspection of some 89 Northwich school-children was arranged, prior to their departure to a North Wales Camp from 18th May to 25th May, 1956.

I would like to say in closing this report, how much I appreciate the help I have received from the Members of the Council and Officials dealing with the various matters which have arisen during the year.

W. S. SLATER, M.B., M.R.C.S., D.P.H.,

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August, 1957.
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